

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as provided below.

1 (Currently amended). A spring fastener comprising: a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure,

a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected,

a first engagement spring, connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs having second front ends, and

a second engagement spring, connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion,

each of the first and second engagement springs having a substantially flat engagement region with a hindrance portion ~~between the free end and the peak in the vicinity of the peak~~, the hindrance portion comprising one to three ripples, each ripple having the form of a depression on said hindrance portion, the depression having a deepest part, a front side, a back side and a width, and the hindrance portion having a surface, wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple,

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, flexible, and bent at its respective front end.

2 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the depth of the ripple is smaller than 0.2 mm.

3 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the hindrance portion comprises ripples, each ripple has the form of a depression, the depression having a deepest part, a front side, a back side and a width, and the hindrance portion has a surface, comprises not more than three ripples.

4 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11 made of a material having a thickness, and wherein the depth of the ripple is smaller than said thickness.

5 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the hindrance portion comprises only one ripple.

6 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the ripple width is larger than the depth of the ripple.

7 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the ripple width is at least twice the size of the depth of the ripple.

8 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 6, wherein the ripple width is in the range of 0.1 to 0.5 mm and the ripple depth is in the range of 0.01 to 0.1 mm.

9 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the back side has a slope in the range of 15 to 30 degrees with regard to the general plane of the hindrance portion.

10 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the front side has a higher slope than the back side.

11 (currently amended). A spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure having a cavity between the first side and the second side, a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected, and a top portion, the first side comprising first barbs having first front ends, and a first engagement spring, the first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs having second front ends, and a second engagement spring, the second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, each of the first and second engagement springs having a free end in the vicinity of the top portion, each spring also comprising a peak and an engagement region with a hindrance portion between the free end and the peak, the hindrance portion comprising only one ripple having the form of a depression, the depression having a deepest part, a back side substantially lacking a front side, and a width, the hindrance portion further having a surface, wherein the depth of the ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the ripple, said ripple providing increased removal force, when the fastener is pulled by an extension of a first part engaged to the first and second barbs, after the fastener has been inserted into a slot of a second part, the slot having a slot width and edges on which edges the engagement region is engaged, the increased removal force being due to the hindrance portion, and wherein the fastener can be extracted when pulled by the extension without damage to said fastener; and

a relief opening in the vicinity of the bottom of the spring fastener.

12 (original). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the back side has the form of a curvature with a gradually decreasing slope.

13 (original). A spring fastener as defined in claim 12, wherein the gradually decreasing slope has the shape of an arc in the range of 50-70 degrees with a radius in the range of 0.03 - 0.05 mm.

14 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of:

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

15 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 3, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of:

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

16 (original). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of:

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs;

first barbs being outside outer barbs and second barbs being inside outer barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

17 (original). A spring fastener as defined in claim 12, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of:

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs;

first barbs being outside outer barbs and second barbs being inside outer barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

18 (cancelled). A spring fastener as defined in claim 14, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, flexible, and bent at its respective front end.

19 (cancelled). A spring fastener as defined in claim 15, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, flexible, and bent at its respective front end.

20 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 16, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, flexible, and bent at its respective front end.

21 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 17, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, flexible, and bent at its respective front end.

22 (currently amended). A spring fastener as defined in claim [14] 1, wherein the material from which the spring fastener was made from has a thickness, and the front ends of the

outside outer barbs are at a distance from the second side smaller than the thickness of said material.

23 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 17, wherein the material from which the spring fastener was made from has a thickness, and the front ends of the outside outer barbs are at a distance from the second side smaller than the thickness of said material.

24 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the material from which the spring fastener was made from has a thickness, and the front ends of the outside outer barbs are at a distance from the second side smaller than the thickness of said material.

25 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the fastener has a width in the vicinity of the top portion of the fastener which is at least 60% as wide as the slot width.

26 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

27 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 3, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

28 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

29 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 12, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

30 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, further comprising additional lower barbs pointing inwardly and originating from the vicinity of the bottom portions of the first side and the second side of the fastener.

31 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, wherein each side of the spring fastener has only one upper barb and one lower barb, the upper barb of one side facing the lower barb of the other side and vice versa.

32 (cancelled). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, further comprising a relief opening in the vicinity of the bottom of the spring fastener.

33 (currently amended). An assembly of a first part, the first part comprising an extension and a spring fastener, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure,

a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected, and

a first engagement spring, connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs, the first and second barbs engaging the extension of the first part, second front ends, and

a second engagement spring, connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, each of the first and second engagement springs having a free end in the vicinity of the top portion,

each spring also comprising a peak and a substantially flat engagement region with a hindrance portion comprising one to three ripples, each ripple having the form of a depression on said hindrance portion, the depression having a deepest part, a front side, a back side and a width, and the hindrance portion having a surface, wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple;

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

34 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 38, wherein the depth of the ripple is smaller than 0.2 mm.

35 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 33, wherein the hindrance portion comprises ripples, each ripple has the form of a depression.

36 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 33, wherein the hindrance portion comprises only one ripple.

37 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 36, wherein the back side has a slope in the range of 15 to 30 degrees with regard to the general plane of the hindrance portion.

38 (currently amended). An assembly of a first part, the first part comprising an extension and a spring fastener, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure having a cavity between the first side and the second side, in which cavity the rib of the first part is disposed, a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected, and a top portion, the first side comprising first barbs having first front ends, and a first engagement spring, the first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs, the first and second barbs engaging the extension of the first part, second front ends, and a second engagement spring, the second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, each of the first and second engagement springs having a free end in the vicinity of the top portion, each spring also comprising a peak and an engagement region with a hindrance portion between the free end and the peak, the hindrance portion comprising only one ripple having the form of a depression, the depression having a deepest part, a back side, substantially lacking a front side, and a width, the hindrance portion further having a surface, wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple, said ripple provides increased removal force, when the fastener is pulled by an extension of a first part engaged to the first and second barbs, after the fastener has been inserted into a slot

of a second part, the slot having a slot width and edges on which edges the engagement region is engaged, the increased removal force being due to the hindrance portion, and wherein the fastener can be extracted when pulled by the extension without damage to said fastener,

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

39 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 38, wherein the back side has the form of a curvature with a gradually decreasing slope.

40 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 39, wherein the gradually decreasing slope has the shape of an arc in the range of 50-70 degrees with a radius in the range of 0.03 -0.05 mm.

41 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 39, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of :

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs;

first barbs being outside outer barbs and second barbs being inside outer barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

42 (canceled). An assembly as defined in claim 38, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

43 (canceled). An assembly as defined in claim 39, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

44 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 41, wherein the material from which the spring fastener was made from has a thickness, the barbs have front points, and the front points of the outside outer barbs are at a distance from the second side smaller than the thickness of said material.

45 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 38, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

46 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 39, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

47 (Currently Amended). An assembly of a second part, the second part having a slot, and a spring fastener, the spring fastener inserted into the slot, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure,

a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected,

a first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs having second front ends, and

a second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion,

each of the first and second engagement springs having a substantially flat engagement region with a hindrance portion ~~between the free end and the peak in the vicinity of the peak~~, the hindrance portion comprising one to three ripples, each ripple having the form of a depression on said hindrance portion, the depression having a deepest part, a front side, a back side and a width, and the hindrance portion having a surface, wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple,

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

48 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 52, wherein the depth of the ripple is smaller than 0.2 mm.

49 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 47, wherein the hindrance portion comprises ripples, each ripple has the form of a depression.

50 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 47, wherein the hindrance portion comprises only one ripple.

51 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 50, wherein the back side has a slope in the range of 15 to 30 degrees with regard to the general plane of the hindrance portion.

52 (currently amended). An assembly of a second part, the second part having a slot, and a spring fastener, the spring fastener inserted into the slot, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure having a cavity between the first side and the second side, in which cavity the rib of the first part is disposed, a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected, and a top portion, the first side comprising first barbs having first front ends, and a first engagement spring, the first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs having second front ends, and a second engagement spring, the second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, each of the first and second engagement springs having a free end in the vicinity of the top portion, each spring also comprising a peak and an engagement region with a hindrance portion between the free end and the peak, the hindrance portion comprising only one ripple having the form of a depression, the depression having a deepest part, a back side, substantially lacking a front side, and a width, the hindrance portion further having a surface, wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple, said ripple provides increased removal force, when the fastener is pulled by an extension of a first part engaged to the first and second barbs, after the fastener has been inserted into a slot of a second part, the slot having a slot width and edges on which edges the engagement region is engaged, the increased removal force being due to the hindrance portion, and wherein the fastener can be extracted when pulled by the extension without damage to said fastener,

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

53 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 52, wherein the back side has the form of a curvature with a gradually decreasing slope.

54 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 53, wherein the gradually decreasing slope has the shape of an arc in the range of 50-70 degrees with a radius in the range of 0.03 -0.05 mm.

55 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 53, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of :

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs;

first barbs being outside outer barbs and second barbs being inside outer barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

56 (canceled). An assembly as defined in claim 53, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

57 (canceled). An assembly as defined in claim 53, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

58 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 55, wherein the material from which the spring fastener was made from has a thickness, the barbs have front points, and

the front points of the outside outer barbs are at a distance from the second side smaller than the thickness of said material.

59 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 52, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

60 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 53, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

61 (currently amended). A vehicle comprising an assembly of a first part, the first part comprising an extension, and a second part, the second part having a slot, the first part and the second part connected with a spring fastener, the spring fastener inserted into the slot, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure, a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected,

a first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs, the first and second barbs engaging the extension of the first part, second front ends, and

a second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion,

each of the first and second engagement springs having a substantially flat engagement region with a hindrance portion ~~between the free end and the peak in the vicinity of the peak~~, the hindrance portion comprising one to three ripples, each ripple having the form of a depression on

said hindrance portion, the depression having a deepest part, a front side, a back side and a width, and the hindrance portion having a surface, wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

62 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 66, wherein the depth of the ripple is smaller than 0.2 mm.

63 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 61, wherein the hindrance portion comprises not more than three ripples, and wherein the depth of each ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the respective ripple.

64 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 61, wherein the hindrance portion comprises one ripple.

65 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 64, wherein the back side has a slope in the range of 15 to 30 degrees with regard to the general plane of the hindrance portion.

66 (currently amended). A vehicle comprising an assembly of a first part, the first part comprising an extension, and a second part, the second part having a slot, the first part and

the second part connected with a spring fastener, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure having a cavity between the first side and the second side, a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected, and a top portion, the first side comprising first barbs having first front ends, and a first engagement spring, the first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs having second front ends, and a second engagement spring, the second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, each of the first and second engagement springs having a free end in the vicinity of the top portion, each spring also comprising a peak and an engagement region with a hindrance portion between the free end and the peak, the hindrance portion comprising only one ripple having the form of a depression, the depression having a deepest part, a back side substantially lacking a front side, and a width, the hindrance portion further having a surface, wherein the depth of the ripple is the distance between the surface of the hindrance portion and the deepest part of the ripple, said ripple providing increased removal force, when the fastener is pulled by an extension of a first part engaged to the first and second barbs, after the fastener has been inserted into a slot of a second part, the slot having a slot width and edges on which edges the engagement region is engaged, the increased removal force being due to the hindrance portion, and wherein the fastener can be extracted when pulled by the extension without damage to said fastener

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

67 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 66, wherein the back side has the form of a curvature with a gradually decreasing slope.

68 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 67, wherein the gradually decreasing slope has the shape of an arc in the range of 50-70 degrees with a radius in the range of 0.03 -0.05 mm.

69 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 67, wherein the barbs are selected from a group consisting essentially of :

first barbs being outer barbs and second barbs being inner barbs;

first barbs being outside outer barbs and second barbs being inside outer barbs; and

first barbs being inner barbs and second barbs being inner barbs.

70 (canceled). A vehicle as defined in claim 67, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

71 (canceled). A vehicle as defined in claim 67, wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

72 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 69, wherein the material from which the spring fastener was made from has a thickness, the barbs have front points, and the front points of the outside outer barbs are at a distance from the second side smaller than the thickness of said material.

73 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 66, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

74 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 67, wherein the engagement region is at least partially wider than the rest of the engagement spring.

75 (Currently Amended). A spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure,

a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected,

a first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs second front ends, and

a second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion,

each of the first and second engagement springs having an engagement region with a hindrance portion ~~between the free end, and the peak~~, the hindrance portion comprising one structure selected from ripple, side rib, upward solid bent extension parallel to the peak and the free end, knurled region, each having a depth, and a combination thereof;

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

76 (previously presented) A vehicle comprising parts connected with a spring fastener, the spring fastener comprising a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the first side connected to the second side thereby forming a U-shaped structure,

a bottom portion wherein the first side and the second side are connected,

a first engagement spring connected to the first side in the vicinity of the bottom portion, the second side comprising second barbs second front ends, and

a second engagement spring connected to the second side in the vicinity of the bottom portion,

each of the first and second engagement springs having an engagement region with a hindrance portion between the free end, and the peak, the hindrance portion comprising one structure selected from ripple, side rib, upward solid bent extension parallel to the peak and the free end, knurled region, each having a depth, and a combination thereof;

wherein at least one barb is cut from its respective side, is flexible, and is bent at its respective front end.

77 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, further comprising a molded elastic body at least on the spring fastener.

78 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 1, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion.

79 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of said spring fastener.

80 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 11, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip

81 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 12, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of said spring fastener.

82 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 12, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

83 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 33, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

84 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 33, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

85 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 38, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

86 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 38, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

87 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 39, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

88 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 39, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

89 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 47, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

90 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 47, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

91 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 52, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

92 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 52, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

93 (previously presented). An assembly as defined in claim 53, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

94 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 53, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

95 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 61, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

96 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 61, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

97 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 66, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

98 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 66, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.

99 (previously presented). A vehicle as defined in claim 67, further comprising a molded elastic body at least under the top portion of the spring fastener.

100 (previously presented). A spring fastener as defined in claim 67, further comprising an elastic body in the form of a gasket extending away from the cavity in the vicinity of the top portion, the gasket comprising a lip.